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KHEREE BOOZOORG, A VILLAGE IN ALIGARH DISTRICT - SOME INDICATION OF CHANGES BETWEEN 1822 and 1974

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The Bengal Regulation VII of 1822 was enacted on the 8th August following a resolution of the 1st August 1822 providing guidelines for a settlement in the Ceded and Conquered Provinces. Under the new plan, extensive investigations were conducted at village level on land and people for a just and fair settlement. The scope and contents of these enumeration - oriented enquiries surpass some of the modern macro-level statistical investigations of 1950's.

The present paper is based on a document of a village settlement under this plan. The name of the village is Kheree Boozoorg, in the Secendra Rao Tahsil of Aligarh district, 4½ kilometers away from the city. The original unpublished documents used in this paper contain (1) 1823 Territorial Department. The Governor-General of Bengal in Council, Revenue, Original consultations, Date 28th, Month August, No.26 (Enclosure to No.24) being "Abstract translation of the Tehsildar's replies to the question in the Board's Perwannah", pp.647-666, (2) Territorial Revenue Proceedings, 28th August 1823, pp.621-635 being "a letter from the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Western Provinces, to H. Mackenzie, Secretary to the Government in the Territorial Department, Fort William, No.24, dated 12th June 1823" submitting "to be laid before the Honourable Governor-General-in Council the accompanying copies of letter noted in the margin /the marginal note reads, "letter from Collector of Allygurh dated 10th February 1823. Enclosure in D.O. letter to Collector dated 31st March. Letter from Collectors dated 10th May - authors/ with an English translation

of the Tahseeldar's replies to the Board's Parwannah and the whole of the original Persian Proceedings of this date regarding the revised settlement of the village Kheree Boozoorg in the Ceded Pergunnah of Secundra Rao, and to recommend that the engagement proposed by the Collector and settlement formed by him be confirmed for 15 years from the 1234 fussily." These unpublished documents are available at the West Bengal Archives as an enclosure to a Memorandum by Holt Mackenzie, Secretary to Government, "in explanation of the settlements under Regulation VII of 1822 and of the measures necessary to give better effects to its provisions". The said Memorandum was partly published in Selections from the Revenue Records of the N.W.P., 1822-1833, (Allahabad, 1872. pp.84-202), but the enclosures containing the above-mentioned documents on village Kheree Boozoorg and statistical data for 19 other villages were never published.

The present paper is intended to show the socio-economic structure of the village Kheree Boozoorg in 1822 and to trace changes since the date to 1961 or 1974 for some selected indicators.

The village Kheree Boozoorg was visited by the Collector of Aligarh, W.I. Harding, in February 1822. The Tahsildar "having reported the completion of the detail of his enquiries according to the Persian Parwanah issued from the Board....., the Collector proceeded to the spot and commenced to verify the Tahsildar's statements and accounts....." The village in 1822 was in a shattered condition perhaps mainly due to rack-renting and oppressions over a number of years. The village held in farm since 1813 was proclaimed for public auction, the zemindars being in default. But so unproductive was it considered that there

was no purchaser, the Sirkar consequently purchased it for Rs.5/- and established a farmer. The village was, however, handed over to former zemindars when they came forward. The 'Tehseeldar' proceeded to the village accompanied by Canoongos and made enquiries. The following are the salient features of the results of the enquiry.

(a) The area of the village was shown as 1210 local beegahs. The zemindary rights were divided among several Rajput 'Singhs'. The mouroosee or khood khast ryots, numbered eight and cultivated 173 beeghas, possessed no rights exclusive of cultivation; the zemindars could dispossess them, they could not transfer their rights to another without the permission of the zemindar.

(b) The collector reported that "the mouroosee or khood khast ryots having no saleable or transferable right in the soil, as long as he fulfils his engagement to the zemindar, the latter will not molest him, the profit or loss on the portion of land he cultivates is his own - he has the advantage over the Paeekhast ryots, that the zemindar gives him the better and more profitable lands to cultivate-the zemindar cannot remove him from the village within the period of his annual engagements, afterwards it is optional with the zemindar to enter into terms with him or not, if he quits the village, he may dispose of, or take away his movable property and also the chapprah of his dwelling. The paeekhast ryots get inferior and less profitable lands to cultivate, these generally that are situated most distant from the village and little watered, but the rates of rent and terms of labour vary every year according to necessity or circumstances The Putwaries perquisites are specified and those of other servants attached to the village".

(c) No. of houses by functional caste, 1822

Zemindars	2
Putteadars	4
Bramins	3
Bandfuroshes (Bhauts)	4
Chamars	12
Uhdee	1
Bullahur	1
Total:	27

"The inhabitants build their houses with the permission of the zemindars and have not to pay for the ground nor any rent, the person that builds a house cannot sell it to another but on leaving the village he can sell the materials".

Number of inhabitants, 1822

Cultivators

Caste	Men	Women	Boys and Girls	Total
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Rajputs	18	11	8	37
Brahmins	8	5	4	17
Bandfuroshes	3	1	2	6
Chamars	11	11	8	30
Total:	40	28	22	90

Settlers and artificiers

Rajput	1	-	-	1
Bandfuroshes	9	6	12	27
Chamars	7	6	8	21
Musulman	3	2	2	7
Balahur	1	1	2	4
Total:	21	15	24	60

Total population 150 "all in indigent circumstances". There were 37 ploughs with two bullocks distributed as follows:-

Zeminders & Putteedars	18
Ryots residing in the village	11
Paheekasht ryots	8
Total:	37

(d) Tehsildar's report contains also the following detailed information:

"One plough tills 10 Beeghas in the Khureef Harvest, and 7 Beeghas in the Rubee or 17 Beeghas per annum. The zemindars and cultivators in this village have no slaves".

Number of persons who cultivate by Halees or ploughmen

Name of Cultivator	Name of Halees	Wages per month(Rs)	Grain for Chubannah	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Bahadoor Singh, Zemindar	Harwa Chamar	2- -	¼seer per day	When grain cheap the Halees get 10 seers of grain and other labourers
Dhòwkur Singh, Putteedar	Poorun Chamar	2- -	-do-	
Munsa Ram, Putteedar	Kunhyeh Chamar	2- -	-do-	
Hurdoo Singh, Putteedar	Wanhyah	2- -	-do-	
Bhaugeerut, Chamar	Usheeff Khan	2- -	-do-	

"5 seers grain at the time of Harvest is reaped and when grain is dear the Halees get 5 seers and other labourers 2½ seers, the Kumeerah ploughs also and gathers cowdung and he gets 1 seer pucka of grain in each Harvest. Other labourers if paid in money receives one and a half anna per day and if in grain two and a half seers per day. There being few assamees in this

village and plenty of land for cultivation they do not cultivate in other villages". "Mohan Lal is hereditary Putwaree; he receives half an anna per Rupee on the collections of the Assamees through the zemindars for the services and on Bhowbe grain one seer per maund from the Asamees who cultivate; Hursookh, hereditary Ballahur, enjoys 19 Beeghas Kham of land and receives five seers of grain per annum per each plough from the cultivators, he get 2½ seers per plough in the Khureef and 2½ seers in the Rubbee. There is no watchman in the village but Dharah inhabitants of Lushkur Gunga who trace robberies and are appointed by the Mahommed Noor Khan farmer, holds 12 beeghas Kham of land. The Chumar receives 1 seer of grain per maund of the produce. Barber holds five Beeghas of land and receives 5 seers of grain for each plough in both Harvests, potter gets 5 seers of grain per each plough in both harvest. Washerman receives 5 seers of grain per each plough in both harvests. Carpenter 5 seers of grain per plough on the khureef and 5 seers in the rubee harvest. Ironsmith receives the same. There is no sweeper in the village. Hursookh Bullahur does the business of sweeper also for which he gets of the birth of a child four annas and at a marriage eight annas".

The number of pucca wells with wheels which were in use in watering fields together with those wells requiring a repair numbered 24 and Khaum wells from which fields are not watered numbered six. The exact number of wells cannot be clearly understood from the document. The following table shows comparative situation upto 1961 or 1974 for some of the indicators.

Kheree Boozoorg, 1822-1974

(Some indicators of changes)

	1822	1853	1891	1951	1961	Remarks.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Total area	691	560	-	589	589	Figures under Col. (5) are for 1970.
2. Area under crops.	440	-	-	-	350	
3. Houses	27	-	-	58 (94)	115 (123)	No. of households in parenthesis.
4. Population	150	402	390	466	615	
5. Cultivators	90	251	214	311	112	Agricultural labour 75 in 1951 and 54 in 1961.
6. Non-Cultivators	60	151	116	80	24	Labourers 60 in 1891, a part of which may agricultural workers.
7. Literate	N.A.	-	12	71	136	
8. Plough (2 Oxen)	37	-	-	-	53	Of 53, six made of iron.
9. Bullock	74	-	-	-	85	
10. Wells	30	-	-	-	15	In 1970 there were 12 tube wells out of 15.
11. Prices of wheat (Rs.0.00) per k.g.	0.04*	-	-	-	2.50	
12. Wages of unskilled worker per day (Rs0.00)	0.09	-	-	-	5.00	

* Prices of 1822 relate to approximate average of past 10 years, all figures from serial 8 under column (5) relate to the year 1970 except these for wages and prices collected in October 1974. All land area in acres, 1961 figures for cultivators and agricultural labourers are for workers only and not for total population.

In course of 140 to 150 years, certain broad indications of changes may be laid down on a preliminary study of the available data. The present senior author visited the village in October 1974 and collected information by direct enquiry and from Tahsil headquarters.

(a) Resources of the village land and people

Cultivated area as proportion to total area did not change very much though apparently population increased at an annual rate of 2.40 per cent between 1822 and 1853, of 0.87 per cent between 1853 and 1891 and of 0.32 per cent between 1891 and 1951, and finally of 3.20 per cent between 1951 and 1961. This follows the general pattern of the population history. There may be some undercounting in 1822, but the population data bears the scrutiny of internal consistency in relation to other variables. The average size of houses was found at 6 in 1823, 7 in 1891, 8 in 1951 and 5 in 1961 whereas the size of households averaged at 5 both in 1951 and 1961.

(b) Material condition of the people.

Irrigation was at a high level in 1853, in 1822 there were wells for irrigation enough to water the entire cultivated area of the village but some of them were in bad shape. The canal given in the map attached to J.R. Hutchison's Allygurh Statistics is still there dividing the village. The present senior author walked through fields from the Tahsil headquarters to arrive at the railway tract and crossed the canal to reach the habited part of the village in October 1974. Irrigation is equally good in 1853 and 1970. The yield rate of wheat per acre apparently increased by some 25 to 30 per cent between 1823 and 1970.

The people were all in "indigent condition" according to Tahsildar in 1822. The Collector also wrote in 1822, "The zemindars have been out of possession 10 years, are in debt and distressed circumstances - the ryots are equally poor and in the event of bad crops, or unfavourable seasons, looking to misfortunes, and calamities of all kinds, ..." The conditions of zemindars or the upper strata of the society perhaps bettered after years of settled government. The same 'singhs' are now "Gram Pradhan" though they may not be descendents of 1822 zemindars. But the families of Gram Pradhans in 1974 seem to be well-to-do, well-fed, live in pucca houses. Percentage of cultivators and agricultural workers to total workers was as high as 96 in 1961. One-third of the village population are agricultural workers. The secular trends in wages seem to be a constancy around a subsistence level equivalent to two kilos of cereals. This level of wages seems to have prevailed throughout. The appearance of the village was one of stagnation if not of decay. In 1822, the village shows a distributive system where a large section had a statutory share in the wealth or produce. In 1974, the system is open, competitive, indicating concentration. Data for 19 other villages of Aligarh for the year 1822 have been discovered and village records for subsequent years are likely to be available at U.P. State Archives, Lucknow, for several points of time, recent records being available at Tahsil headquarters. We shall try to analyse the data for this group of 20 villages for the period 1822-1971.

A NOTE ON THE PALMER PAPERS (BODLEIAN) AND THE ROLE OF INDIAN CAPITAL

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This paper aims to focus on the significance of the private papers of John Palmer, available in the manuscript collection of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and to draw the researchers' attention to the value of this source which has remained virtually unutilised. In particular an attempt will be made to explore how, considering that very little of the contemporary Indian business records are available, the Palmer Papers may be utilized to investigate the relationship between British business and Indian capital.

The papers now at Oxford, originally in the possession of Sir Reginald Hobhouse, relate mainly to the business activities of John Palmer and his Agency House in the period 1808 to 1835. Palmer was possibly the richest Europeans in India at one time : in 1825-26 his household expense was Rs.70,000 in a single year and three year later the assets of his firm were valued at Rs. 1.53 crores; this was just before the collapse of the Palmer House in January 1830.[1] After the collapse Palmer continued to be in business on a smaller scale. The main series in the Palmer collection consists of "out-letter books" (i.e. letters written by J. Palmer to various correspondents on business as well as private matters) numbered M.S.Eng. lett.c.67 to 125 in the Library. In this series the earliest letter is dated 4 February 1808 and the last, 31 August 1835. Two volumes overlapping this series contain some letters relating to 1824 and 1827 collected separately (M.S. Eng. Lett. c. 126 and 127). These 61 volumes containing copies of over ten thousand letters sent out were evidently used in the Palmer office for reference

to earlier correspondence. There are some papers other than this main series:- (1) a collection of letters received (M.S. Eng. Lett. d. 105) including some written by John Palmer from Batavia where, having been shipwrecked, he spent some time in 1812. (2) Some accounts of household expenses of the Palmers have also survived (M.S. Eng. Hist. c. 301). I have discussed the data in these collections elsewhere.[2] One should also note in this connection an account of the Palmer family in the India Office Library (MSS Eng. D. 443(2)) by Edward Palmer.

The problem we shall be concerned with in this paper is the relationship between Indian capital and British capital as revealed in the Palmer correspondence. The compilation of an index of all the Indian correspondents of Palmer, involving the shifting of over ten thousand letters, in conjunction with cross reference relating items subject-wise, is the only way of constructing a coherent picture of Indian capitalists' relations with this outstanding and typical Agency House. (A major limitation, of course, is that we only possess the "out letter" books). This attempt has not been completed yet and we present here some tentative findings.

In the period before the crash of 1830, the Indian correspondents of J. Palmer were broadly of four categories: (a) people asking for favours, mostly job-seekers; (b) members of the landed gentry, including some with rentier investment in agency houses; (c) Indian businessmen, including moneylenders, and (d) clerks and dependents, defaulting debtors, recipients of pension, etc. In the period after the crash, correspondence with the third category increases in volume very sharply. This reflects the increased dependence of John Palmer on native capital after the liquidation of the old firm: in this

period well-known names such as Moti Lal Seal, Dwarka nath Tagore, Raghuram Gossain, Rustomjee Cowasjee, etc. figure prominently. Even in the earlier period, according to J. Palmer, native capital played an important role in his firm and in agency house business in general. On the brink of the crash Palmer wrote a letter to the members of the government committee on public loans to be given to agency houses:

> The government should "deal out accommodation with an unsparing hand... in order that for a time the great mercantile houses may because independent of the native money dealers whose continued hesitation to renew their wanted pecuniary transactions (not with us only but with every house in Calcutta) renders it absolutely impossible to count upon their assistance .... We know indeed that the principal Gomstahs of the great up country shroffs and other capitalists have received and already executed orders to a large extent for the remittance of the capital of their employers, so that the actual means at the disposal of moneylender in Calcutta are now induced /reduced?/ in an alarming degree and many of the principal native residents have conceived a notion that the entire run of Calcutta is at hand. Our situation among the European Houses has the peculiarity that we hitherto enjoyed beyond comparison a more extensive command of native capital....."[3]

It was not the Agency Houses alone which thus depended on loans, chiefly short term loans, of native capital. The European planters and traders the Agency Houses supported were in turn dependent on native capital. These Europeans were, Palmer writes to M. Ricketts -

> "men set up by us on a limited scale; and whose apparently [sic] regular and sure transactions with the shroffs tempt that class to proffer assistance the Agent never contemplated; and so the ball [starts] rolling on an accumulating, the Agent begins to demur, and the shroff becomes wary and clamorous. Then comes the disclosure of embarrassment [i.e. inability to repay shroffs] and an urgent requisition [for cash advance from the Agency House]; and for so much as the Agents credulity may be taxed at, the shroff gets satisfied; but the agent then demands security to cover both his old and his new advance; believing that he has liquidated all claims, when in truth he had only discharged those which the planter or trader could not ward off."[4]

These two lengthy quotations are given to show how the European planter, trader and agent were like conjurers keeping several balls up in the air at the same time -- a trick which dashed to the ground as soon as the circulating capital was withdrawn by the native capitalist. I have argued elsewhere that it was the colonial government's policy of using a portion of the surplus from the agrarian section, i.e. land revenue, to loan money to European agency houses which enabled these houses to keep native capital in its subservient place.[5]

A detailed study of the correspondence shows the kind of dependence that developed between some Indian businessmen and Palmer. One should note that we are taking our examples from the period 1832-35, after the crash, when Palmer may be considered as typical of the small European businessman (except that he had possibly better contacts than most, on account of his past).

Since the business accounts are not available, one cannot measure the turnover of business and the extent of dependence on native capital. In the post-1831 period, it is clear, a small European businessman, given the tightness of the money market, was for the time being at a disadvantage vis-a-vis native capitalists. "Capitalists seem to shirk an agency whilst business -- safe and good -- can only be attracted by cash".[6] One must also bear in mind the facts that this was the period of the gradual replacement of the Agency House system with the modern managing agencies, and that (having undergone liquidation recently) Palmer's credit in the market was at the lowest ebb. Palmer's correspondence in 1832-34 is full of importunities for loans from former Indian business associates and clients.[7] Raghu Ram Gossain, his closest Indian associate in the past, refused to loan money and Palmer depended heavily on Motilal Seal and D.N.Tagore upto May 1835 by which time "RRG has resumed his relations with me, thank God".[8] The terms on which loans were obtained were stiff: "I am staggered", Palmer writes to Motilal Seal, "by your short date loans and high rate of interest and trust you may conveniently be more indulgent to me in both respects".[9] Moneyed men were beginning to prefer safe investments in government securities and banks. "Times are sadly

changed and Government Agents and Savings Banks absorb the ready cash of commercial men; Rich Baboos make short advances at 10 to 12 per cent. for commercial purposes and not within the reach of men without substance".[10] Loans were short term because the returns were higher if capital could be rolled faster: "money gets dearer [underlined in original to emphasise the pun ruefully referring to the high interest rate] to his [Raghu Ram Gossain's] heart every day and because he can turn it frequently here he is restive under delays".[11]

While Palmer complained in this fashion, the same principle operated in his business too -- "turning" money as frequently as possible -- for his profits too were from merchant capitalistic investment confined to the sphere of circulation. The picture one can piece together from fragments of letters is roughly as follows: First, he continued the old business of advancing cash to indigo planters. This ties up some of his capital for a few months, his most long term investment. It was, for a small business like his, just touch and go: "I am proceeding in the new years advances to my few indigo constituents, and shall be thankful for your assistance [i.e. loans] until the return upon the old enable me to go on a little better by myself." Thus to Motilal Seal, his creditor.[12] Among these indigo factory owners at least one was an Indian.[13] Secondly, Palmer, like other agents, was a broker, selling on behalf of Indian merchants textiles etc. and obtaining a commission therefor. We have a copy of an advertisement, which he circulated in Bengali and English, containing his commission rates etc.[14] To prospective clients he would write: "If you contemplate the renewal of your operation in trade or have any other occasion

for an agent here, I offer my services... Corahs of the best quality are most certain for sale..."etc.[15] For a few years he functioned also as a banian. Finally, Palmer also acted as an agent for shipment for export. In the last two types of business all he needed was enough cash for advance to cover only a portion of the value of the commodity in question for a short time (until the full value was realised from the purchaser). Thus he writes "had I ten lacs at command I could insure 70 to 100 of excellent and easy business".[16] He only needed "pecuniary resources to make partial and secure advances upon Goods".[17] Indian businessmen like Motilal Seal also obtained commission in the same way, in addition to interests on loans. "Motilal Seal the most opulent banian here, and perhaps the ablest, volunteered his services --- My business, besides providing for several of his dependents, gave him upwards of 4000 Rs. dustooree and this year may double it."[18]

Finally, a few comments on the end of an epoch of Indian enterprise in the 1830's as revealed in the Palmer papers. European capital was moving to new fields while Indian capitalists (with the exception of entrepreneurs like Dwarakanath ~~Nxxxx~~Tagore) were withdrawing themselves into the safe and constricting shell of rentier type investment. We have already noted Palmer's observation that Indian capital was attracted more by government bonds and savings banks than commercial dealings. Cossinath Bose, approached for supplying Korah textiles, sends instead money "for investiture (sic) in government 4 per cent notes".[19] Another trusted friend and businessman Radhamadhab Banerji is "very wisely laying out all (his) money in houses".[20] Motilal Seal is approached in vain

to invest in collieries; Palmer, himself unable to raise that much capital (about the 60,000 was the estimated price), points out to him prospects in joint industrial investment: "the short notice of sale of the Ranee Gunge Colliery, given by Assignees of Alexander & Co. is perhaps significant of its hidden value, as of latent purchasers. In other words, I suspect a job, which you and others may content for more fairly".[21] We do not get Motilal Seal's letter in response to this suggestion but we find Palmer soliciting Europeans henceforth and we know that only Dwaraka Nath Tagore with W. Carr responded to this opportunity. This withdrawal of native big capitalists into rentiership, evidenced by many other sources, was a reaction to the unfavourable terms that were forced upon those who loaned money to Agency Houses, an out come of the monopolistic powers exercised by the top European Agency Houses with the aid of the colonial government which lent money to the former at each crisis (1811, 1814, 1825, 1827, 1830) when the Agencies were in a position of disadvantage vis-a-vis indigenous loan capital.

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19. J.P. to Cossinath Bose, 17 and 24 April 1833, c. 123.

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SHIVAJI AND HIS COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

V.G. Dighe, Bombay

Shivaji's achievements were many and varied. His personality was unique. He was truly a Carlylean hero as King. "His mission was order. He was here to make what was disorderly, chaotic into a thing ruled, regular."[1] The territory over which he was to rule as King had been devastated by war and the people who inhabited the Mawal valleys, pursued their blood feuds over generations, and plunder and rapine were the order of the day. Shivaji not only tamed these wild people but made them his devoted followers. He brought peace and order to the Mawals and surrounding districts, unknown under earlier regimes. His earliest biographer Sabhasad[2] brings out the significance of his rise to power in these memorable words: "Foreigners ruled all over the land. It was an extraordinary event that a Maratha should attain kingship in his homeland and hold the royal sceptre."[3]

The Marathas, a warlike people, inhabit the western part of the Deccan. Their early history is lost in dim antiquity. But from the beginning of the Christian era rose might kingdoms in the land, the Satavahanas, the Chalukyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Yadavas, which knit the Marathas into a homogenous people. Under the aegis of these native dynasties, the Marathas attained propsarity beyond measure; they developed their peculiar social institutions, built lovely temples, perfected their language and enriched their literature.

After the fall of the Yadavas in 1318 A.D., the tide of Islam overwhelmed the land. Alauddin Khiljī's warriors carried the crescent to the southernmost corner of India and with the fall of the great Vijayanagar empire in 1565 A.D., under the hammerblows of the Deccan Sultanates, disappeared the last vestige of independent Hindu power in the South. Islam became triumphant throughout the length and breadth of the land.

The defeats of their armies in the field, the destruction of centuries-old dynasties and the ruin that followed in the social structure of society, brought on the children of the soil a feeling of dispair and deep frustration and created in their minds a sort of inferiority complex that they were no match for the foreign invaders, that they were in no way worthy to administer their affairs, and that it was wise to reconcile themselves to the change of rulers and bend to the wishes of their new masters. It is to the glory of the Marathas that they were the first to rouse themselves from this mental torpor and strike boldly for the liberation of their homeland. The gallant struggle led by Shivaji for the liberation of his country is recounted in numerous archives, Marathi as well as non-Marathi. His life-story has become the subject-matter of many well written biographers and some not so well written. Shivaji built up several institutions to perpetuate his kingdom; the elan it received from its founder-member made it a major force in Indian politics for over a century after he was removed from the scene by the cruel hand of death in 1680. His institutions rouse administration and call for a detailed study.

Several factors account for the rise of the Maratha power. Shivaji's personality; he was a great military leader, brave and resourceful. With meagre resources he fought his adversaries and defeated them. With military leadership he combined the qualities of an able administrator and a wise statesman. The people who came under his rule were assured that they would be ruled justly and wisely and remained loyal to him against all blandishments of the enemy. He roused in them feelings of patriotism so that they continued to fight the enemy for over two decades to secure their independence. The country he chose for founding his kingdom, lay in difficult natural surroundings, away from highways and was studded with forts. The terrain was difficult for cavalry to operate and a small force emerging from the walls of a fort or concealed in the forests of the Sahyadri range, could hit at the enemy with impunity and disappear in no time. He was a good judge of men; not a little of his success was due to the choice of the officers he made to carry out his orders. He made his enemies pay for the wars he had to fight and kept a strict eye on state expenditure. His financial system, his revenue system, evoke our admiration. His Council of Ministers is represented as comparable to the executive council of the British Viceroys of India or the Cabinet in England. A claim is made that "if the system had been loyally worked out by the successors of Shivaji many of the dangers which ultimately destroyed the Maratha confederacy might have been avoided."[4] Such a claim can be accepted or rejected only after a close look at the beginning, evolution, composition and duties of his Council of Ministers.

Ramachandrapant Amatya in his Adnyapatra raises the question as to why a King needed ministers at all. He had worked as minister under the great Raja and later played an important part in the war of independence. Speaking from first-hand experience he says "Ministers are necessary to lighten the burden of the King. The King has to attend to multifarious duties: to defend the country against foreign aggressors, to keep his forts and armies well provided, protect his subjects, watch over the State's revenue and expenditure, decide important disputes, keep prepared to face sudden calamities, perform traditional religious rites, honour wise men in the country. As it is not possible for one man to attend to all these problems, the king has to seek the assistance of able subordinates or ministers. As the ministers are in close relation to the king, and have to help him carry out his duties ably, he must be careful in choosing persons who will fill up the posts of such great responsibility with credit. He should be a good judge of men and promote persons of probity, industry, virtue and good social position from small posts to the highest by degree. Once they have been appointed there should be perfect confidence between the master and officers to enable them to give their best in his service."[5] According to Amatya's view then, the Council of Ministers was the creation of the King and had no existence independent of him. It has no resemblance to the English Cabinet which represents the majority in Parliament, where the Prime Minister and not the King, dominates and decides policies.

For a correct perspective of the subject it is necessary to know how the Council came into existence, how it expanded and how it functioned and why it fell into desuetude under the Peshwas.

The Council had its beginning in the small group of officers which accompanied Dadaji Kondadeo to the Poona jagir of Shahji in 1642. While returning to his post from Bangalore, Shivaji and his mother Jijabai came with Dadaji. At that time for the management of the Jagir were sent Shamraj Nilkanth Ranzekar as Peshwa, Balkrishna Pant Hanumante as Mujumdar, Sonopant as Dabir and Raghunath Ballal as Sunhis. This was the nucleus of what later developed into the council of ministers.[6] In those days it was common for Deshmukhs to have a complement of these officers for the management of their Jagirs.[7]

In 1647 after Dadaji's death, Shivaji who had now familiarised himself with civil and military affairs of his jagir, appointed Tukoji Chor as Sarnobat of his increasing force. Nine years later, by 1656, Shivaji had occupied Javli, assaulted Junnar and Ahmadnagar and acquired much treasure. He looked for a competent Sarnobat and appointed Manakoji Dahatonde to the post. It is possible Tukoji Chor died in the meanwhile.[8]

The meeting with Afzal Khan, his death and defeat in 1659 from a watershed in the career of Shivaji. In a year or two there was a reshuffle in the Raja's office. Shamraj Nilkanth proved unequal to the rising demands of the duties of his post and was displaced by Moropant Pingle who had

distinguished himself by hard work (3 April 1662). Narahari Anand appears to be acting as interim Peshwa in 1661.[9]

Another officer who made his mark by dint of hard work was Nilo Sondeo. He was appointed Surnis (Sachiv). Gangoji Mangaji was appointed waqnis (Mantri) and Balam Bhat and Govind Bhat were appointed Purohits and looked after the family's religious functions. Netaji Palkar became the Sarnobat of the cavalry and Yesoji Kank of the infantry.[10]

It is surmised that Netaji became Sarnobat in 1661. At the time of the meeting with Afzal Khan he had been posted near Pratapgarh and was one of the commanders who dispersed the enemy's army. In 1666 owing to "differences with the Raja Netaji left his service and joined the Mughals. He remained in Mughal service for ten years, turned a Muslim, but was re-converted to Hinduism in 1676. It is not known if he held a military command after his reconversion."[11]

Netaji Palkar was succeeded by Kadatoji Gujar in the post of Sarnobat. On his appointment Kadatoji

was honoured with the title "Pratap Rao" and is known to history as Pratap Rao Gujar. Pratap Rao, it would seem, was well connected and was able to persuade a number of high-class Maratha families to join the Raja's cause. Pratap Rao was a brave soldier and distinguished himself in a number of hard fought actions. He was censured by the Raja for sparing the enemy under Bahlol Khan at the battle of Umrani (15 April 1663). Pratap Rao was stung to the quick by the censure and rushed at the enemy at Nesari (24 February 1674) in a wild charge. The

general was killed, but the disheartened force was rallied by Pratap Rao's lieutenant Anand Rao Makaji. Anand Rao fought desperate actions against Bijapuri forces.[12]

Shivaji regretted the death of Pratap Rao Gujar, and after inspection of his troops at Chiplun promoted Hansaji Mohite to the post of Commander-in-Chief on 8th April 1674 with the title Hambir Rao. He remained in the post till the end of the Raja's death and beyond.[13] In fact he swayed the army and assured Sambhaji of his succession against the court party of Soyara Bai.

When Jai Singh invaded the Deccan in 1665 to chastise Shivaji, the latter sent to the Rajput prince a learned Brahmin, Raghunath Pandit (Atre) with the title Pandit Rao, to negotiate peace.[14] As a result of the negotiations Shivaji decided to meet Jai Singh in person. This Raghunath Pandit continued in the post of Pandit Rao (Ecclesiastical Head) and was one of the eight ministers at the time of Coronation.

Mahadaji Samraj was appointed Surnis in 1656. After the occupation of Shringarpur in 1661 Nilo Sondeo took his place.[15] In 1662 Nilo Sondeo became Mejumdar and Annaji Datto was posted to the Surnisi. Annaji Datto continued in the post right up to the reign of Sambhaji and became famous for the survey and assessment of agricultural land he carried out.

On his return from Agra the Raja devoted time to put his administration on sound lines. Among the many innovations that he introduced was the appointment of Niraji Raoji, a learned Brahmin as Chief Justice.[16]

There is some uncertainty about the post of Mujumdar or Amatya. The Sabhasad chronicle makes the first reference to the appointment as under: "When Shivaji was sent back to the Poona Jagir in 1640-41, Balakrishna Pant, cousin of Naro Pant Dakshit went with him as a Mujumdar."[17]

In January 1660 Moropant Pingle, according to Jadhe Shakavali became Mujumdar. When on 3rd April 1662 he was raised to the Peshwaship, Nilo Sondeo was made Mujumdar. But from documents 8-10 in Marathyanchya Itihasachi Sadhanen, Volume VIII, it would appear that Nilo Pant was working as Mujumdar from 1660. Nilo Pant died about the year 1673 and was succeeded in the post by his two sons, the elder one Naro Nilkanth being the de jure Mujumdar and the younger one the de facto Mujumdar, as he possessed the necessary talent.[17A] He became full-fledged Amatya in 1691.

The Qanu Zabta or Manual of Conduct was promulgated by the Raja at the time of his Coronation.[18] Shankar Rao Joshi has raised doubts about the date of the document as it mentions several posts which did not exist in Shivaji's time.[19] The Zabta may however be considered as a fair exposition of the duties of the eight ministers.

(1) The Peshwa or Mukhya Pradhan was to supervise the general administration of the kingdom. His seal on all royal documents was necessary if they were to be effective. He was, when necessary, to lead the armed forces in battles, make arrangements for the administration of newly acquired territories. He was to work with the Counsel and cooperation of his colleagues.

(2) The Amatya or Mujumdar was the Finance Minister. He was to supervise the income and expenditure of the State. For this purpose the record-keepers and accountants of the Subhas were to be subordinate to him. He was required to put his seal on all official documents and the statements of income and expenditure. Like the Peshwa, he was not merely a civil officer but when necessary was to fight and protect territory. At the Coronation the post was held by the two sons of Nilo Sondeo. Naro Nilkanth was the elder of the two. But as he was lacking in ability, the work of the post was looked after by his younger brother Ramachandra Nilakanth. He fully justified his choice and in later days was the leader of the hosts which defeated Mughal armies.

(3) The Sachiv (Persian Surnis) was to examine all royal letters and put them in proper shape by carrying out necessary corrections. He was to serve in war and protect the acquired territory. His seal was necessary for all royal documents. Annaji Datto was the famous Sachiv of Shivaji who carried out survey of land and his assessment is known as Annaji Datto's Dhara.

(4) The Mantri, Waqnis, was a kind of home minister. He was not a mere chronicler as Sir Jadunath Sarkar would have us believe.[20] According to the Zabta he was to be deliberately careful on the internal problems of the State. Invitations (to royal audiences?), chronicling of important events fell in his province. His seal was necessary for royal documents. He was also required when called upon to fight and to protect the talukas.

Gangaji Mangaji was the first Waqnis to be succeeded by Annaji Datto in August 1681. Within a year Annaji Datto became Surnis and his place was taken by Dattaji Trimbak. Was this Dattaji Trimal the author of the first Life of Shivaji - the Sivdigvijay Bakhar?

The duties of the Senapati (Commander-in-Chief) Pandit Rao (Dandadhyaksha) and Chief Justice were clearly cut out. The Senapati was to look after military affairs, deal with the problems of his men and lead the army into battle. The Pandit Rao was the Ecclesiastical head, looking into religious problems. The Chief Justice was to supervise the administration of Justice. Justice was in most cases locally administered by village and Parganna Panchayats or caste panchayats. It was only when the party was not satisfied with the decision of the panchayats that the Subahdar referred the matter to higher authorities who, in the first instance, granted him a fresh Panchayat and when that decision was also not satisfactory, the question came before the entire court. Such occasions must have been rare indeed.

For the proper administration of the country, the country was divided into three divisions; upper Konkan was placed under Moro Trimbak Peshwa, Southern Konkan under Annaji Datto Sachiv. The Desh country was put under Dattaji Trimal Waqnis. Revenue and other collections were made through Karkuns, Tarafdars, Hawaldars. Over them were Subahdars whose work was supervised by the Ministers. These three were to submit to the Raja the statement of accounts and were to deliver balances into the treasury. Obviously they did not remain at the court throughout the year, but functioned through their Mutaliqs or

deputies.

It is said that at the time of Coronation the eight members of the Council got their Sanskrit names and stood round the throne to pour holy water from gold and silver jars on the King's head. They were seated in the following order:[22]

Right Side:	Left Side:
1. Peshwa	5. Senapati
2. Amatya	6. Sumant
3. Sachiv	7. Pandit Rao
4. Mantri	8. Nyayadhish

All these ministers with the exception of the Commander-in-Chief and the Mantri were of the Brahman caste and all except the last two, led armies on expedition. It is not known what authorities the ministers had when the Raja himself led armies into battle and conducted negotiations in person. At best they were his advisers and secretaries who looked to the details, once the Raja laid down policies:

Chitnis (pp. 342-43) has given the following scale of salaries to the various officers:

Peshwa	...	15,000 Hons.
Amatya	...	12,000 Hons.
Other ministers	...	10,000 Hons.

Considering the high value of money in those days and the small extent of Shivaji's kingdom these amounts appear to be very much on the high side. The same remark applies to a remark of Sabhasad in Shiva Charitra: "The eight Pradhans were each given a present of 100,000 hons in cash,

an elephant, a horse, ceremonial dresses and ornaments." When the Raja was required to pay a large army and his officers by plundering the enemy's country, he would not give away the hard-earned money so liberally. Considering the salaries paid to lower officials, the ministerial salaries appear to be out of proportion.

There is no sufficient evidence to conclude that in establishing the Ashta-Pradhan Mandal, the Raja was in any way following the injunctions of Shukraniti or any ancient treatise. The titles of the ministers were, no doubt, Sanskritised at the time of Coronation, but their duties were dissimilar to those of the ministers mentioned in the Shukraniti. Perhaps he was drawing on the model of the Muslim Sultanates known to him. 23

Thus, in Shivaji's State, we find political power resting in the crowned prince. Shivaji's ministers, no doubt, served him well and faithfully and many of them remained in their posts for long periods. But it was the Raja who directed all the activities of the State and ruled as well as reigned. Though the Raja received advice from the ministers and often accepted their suggestions, the responsibility for formulating policy was entirely his own. His ministers were his subordinates who carried out his orders. The overriding authority whatever the Sanuzabta may say, was left in the hands of the Sovereign himself. The Council of Ministers functioned at the Raja's will and had no existence independent of him, as happens in the case of a Cabinet of Ministers where the parliamentary form of government prevails.

Shivaji's successors did not possess his tireless energy and came to rely more and more on their counsellors. Sambhaji (1680-89) resigned his authority to his minister Kavi Kalasha, while in the fugitive Rajaram's time (1689-1700) the exigency of the situation required that the King should give a free hand to his advisers. In his absence in the South, Ramchandra Pant Amatya and Shankaraji Sachiv directed Maratha activities on their own initiative. Even at Jinji Rajaram resigned himself to the advice of another minister, the Pratinidhi. These ministers lacking the prestige of the King's position, were obliged to purchase the loyalty of their adherents by making appeals to their self-interest, by holding out promises of large rewards in the shape of Jagirs or fiefs, with which the Maratha was already familiar and which the Mughal Emperor was bestowing on renegades. Shivaji always insisted on regular payment from his treasury to his officers. But during the protracted war with Aurangzeb, little treasure could be found with which to pay the chiefs and their men. It was necessary to assign them territories and ask them to provide for themselves.

In the interregnum from Sambhaji's capture in 1689 to the home coming of Shahu in May 1707, conditions in Maharashtra were abnormal. The machinery of government as devised by Shivaji had broken down. A number of Maratha captains raised forces on their own, led expeditions in Mughal territory, and made collection of revenues from which they reimbursed themselves. Shahu when he returned home with a handful of body-guards, was called upon to establish his superior claims against the

protege of his aunt - Tara Bai, and local Mughal officers, and set up his authority over the new warlords. At first the patriotic tradition of his grandfather and the support of the Mughal noblemen, Zulfiqar Khan enabled him to hold his own against his rivals. But the initial advantage needed to be buttressed by personal valour and leadership in a country bristling with arms. Shahu lacked the commanding talents and energy of his grandfather, and the patriotic tradition could not help him long; he was scarcely able to hold his own against the party of his aunt when the support of Zulfiqar Khan was gone. Balaji Vishwanath who became Peshwa in face of mounting difficulties, came to realize that it was no longer possible to adhere to Shivaji's old constitution under which the king, aided by his eight ministers, was the sole ruler of his dominions. The King's position as against the warlords who were practically independent in several parts of the Deccan, had deteriorated. The only way to save the kingship being submerged and the country being involved in civil war and turmoil was to accept the chiefs as vassals with practically free reins in their territory, to acknowledge them as hereditary jagirdars who would bring their levies to the common standard when called upon to do so, but otherwise would have a free hand in the management of their jagirs. Shahu, unwittingly was thus reversing some of the basic concepts of Shivaji's policy-discouragement of the hereditary system of transmitting high officers in one and the same family and refusal to grant jagirs-assignments of districts for the support of civil and/or military officers. As a measure of

expediency Shahu accepted the advice of the Peshwa, concluded an agreement with Kanhoji Angre, Tara Bai's most powerful adherent, on these lines and gave similar freedom of action to other chiefs. A revolution in breaking the Maratha State into a number of feudal baronetcies began.

Shahu's stay-at-home policy and the incompetence of other ministers accelerated the process of feudalization. The want of capacity in his successor completed it. In 1720 after the death of Baleji Vishwanath, his first Peshwa, Shahu could have exerted himself, done away with the feudal tenure, organised the State, revitalized the council of ministers, and led his army against the Nizam. But Shahu would do nothing of the kind; he let his young Peshwa raise armies on his own, proceed against the Nizam who was threatening the King's position, penetrate Gujarat and Malva on his own. The last opportunity of thus regaining the king's authority was lost. The chiefs who raised men and money for realizing the claims of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi in distant lands on their own, could not be expected to be sub-servient to royal commands and render minute accounts to court officers, when the sovereign himself gave no directive and showed little interest in distant operations.

Baji Rao who succeeded to the Peshwaship in 1720, proved himself an able commander and effected large conquests in Hindustan and on the west coast. These he kept to himself and became the leading feudal chief. His example was copied by other ministers and military chiefs. The Pratinidhi, the

Amatya, the Sachiv, the Senapati and other cabinet members, though they retained their nominal rank, became transformed into hereditary feudatories and the new warlords who had sprung into existence during the war with Aurangzeb and later, swelled their ranks.

The position was confirmed by Raja Shahu himself. On his death-bed he wrote two rescripts.[24] By the first he asked the Peshwa to wield supreme authority as there was none in his family to carry on the government wisely. By the second he directed his successors to maintain the Peshwa in power.

The Raja having thus resigned royal authority, it was assumed by the Peshwa. Some of the Chiefs like the Pratinidhi, Raghuji Bhonsle and Gaikwod demurred, but they were overawed by a demonstration of force. The successor of Raja Shahu, Ramraja, was an adopted child, bred in humble circumstances. He could not muster force strong enough to oppose the Peshwa and gave his written sanction[25] that the Peshwa's authority be obeyed.

The Council of Ministers thus arose out of the group of officers that accompanied Shivaji as a jagirdar of Mahal Poona 1642. As his activities increased, the establishment was expanded to include more officers, the incompetents were weeded out to make way for better men. Four or five of these loom large in Shivaji's reign after the Coronation-Moropant Pingle Peshwa, Ramachandra Pant Amatya, Annaji Datto Sachiv and the Senapati. But we have no idea how exactly the Council of Ministers functioned from day-to-day. After Shivaji's death the council withered away; Sambhaji ignored it leaving state affairs to Kavi Kalesh; Rajaram was a weakling functioning at

Jinji through his Pratinidhi, Ramchandra Pant Amatya, Shankarji Sachiv and his two able commanders, Santaji Ghorpade and Palaji Jadhav were left to fight the war with the Mughals on their own. Shahu made appointments of the Ashta Pradhan Mandal, but the Rajmandal never functioned properly. The Peshwa became the Raja's main supporter and gathered in his hands the reins of the executive power. In the expansion of Maratha power, the Peshwa created new jagirdars like Sindia, Holkar, Pawar, Panwarchans, Raste, Gokhale and others. The members of the Ashta Pradhan Mandal took little active part in the affairs of the State in the later days of Shahu and became petty jagirdars. The instructions of Council of Ministers lost all relevancy under the Peshwas. The powers of the Pratinidhi and the Senapati were clipped and their jagirs reduced. The descendants of other ministers became petty Inamdars out-classed by the Peshwa's military chiefs like Sindia, Holkar, Panwarchans etc.

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Sen's Administrative System of the Marathas (1925) is a comprehensive study of the subject though it requires to be revised in parts.

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INDO-BRITISH RELATIONS ONE YEAR AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Partha Sarathi Gupta, New Delhi

The purpose of this paper is to draw attention to an unpublished letter of V.K.Krishna Menon to C.R. Attlee, which shows how Britain and India appeared to be drifting apart soon after independence, and how Krishna Menon hoped by a direct personal appeal to Attlee on the strength of his old Labour Party connexions, to reverse the trend.[1] Only when the official records of the year 1948 are released and when the Krishna Menon papers are properly classified will it be possible to follow up some of the suggestive points of this document. However, as this document is in the Attlee papers at University College, Oxford, and now easily accessible to Indian historians, it appears appropriate that significant extracts from it should be made available to Indian historians, so that they might follow it up.

In the Attlee papers the letter is headed 'Personal and Secret', and the envelope in which it came, which has also been preserved with the letter, was also marked personal and secret, with the additional inscription 'To be opened only by the Prime Minister'; and sealed with sealing wax. Attlee's secretary has left a note attached to this letter, which says, 'P.M. replied in his own hand' - a tantalizing remark arousing a curiosity which may possibly be satisfied when the Menon papers are properly sorted out.

Menon had been asked by the Indian government to await Attlee's return from his summer holidays and get in touch with him privately before leaving for India for consultations with Jawaharlal Nehru. While waiting for "some important messages on the 2nd September", he wrote to Attlee on the previous day, pouring out his sense of frustration rather too candidly for a diplomat. The following extracts are revealing:

"I left you on the last occasion for the first time with more than a passing feeling that we were making no impression and that there were barriers which appear almost unbreakable. I have not felt like that before, even when I have drawn blanks. We have, during the last month or two, been up against polite refusals all round, particularly in defence matters, and while I appreciate all the difficulties, I have the uncomfortable feeling that I am letting my side down by not recognising that we are very much on the outside and will perhaps remain so. The Kashmir business at New York was a great shock to us, perhaps far more than I have been able to convey to you. Thanks to your intervention, it has somewhat improved, but it is a running sore which has affected the good relations between our two people. We have the distressing feeling that decent behaviour is penalised and ethical values at a discount, and that reasonableness lays us open to being regarded as weak or even cowardly. Some of this is exaggerated, but I myself feel that basically all this is true.

For your own and personal information (as the whole of this letter also is) I would tell you what I have at last told my Prime Minister that I feel that I am not doing much good here. I have, as you know, great affection and loyalty to him, and you have to know him as I do to feel the same way about it. There are not many people like him anywhere, and I am sure that when he comes here this time you would find this out..... He trusts me so completely, and I have the discomforting fear that he often relies on my judgment and capacity. It is far better to tell him that there are no longer as potent as they might be.

I have written to you separately about the points you raised at our last meeting and will submit our position to you so that at any rate, by lack of information, you should not find yourself against us on Hyderabad, practically waging war on us in Kashmir, or, worse than all this, treating Pakistan and us alike!

This is not the kind of letter that the representative of one country writes to the Prime Minister of another and of a great state, and I hope you will forgive me if I have presumed by implication the right to greater intimacy than I may claim. As I have said earlier, I have, in the last twelve months, seen and learned more of you."

The lack of rapport Britain and India and the pro-Pakistan tilt of the British Foreign Office can be attributed to Bevin's desire to build up a British zone of influence with the oil-rich

Muslim states of West Asia. A fortnight after this letter was written, we find Bevin telling Dalton that in order to be independent of the U.S.A. and prevent any bilateral deal between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., he was trying to organise Western Europe and the Commonwealth as a separate bloc, and that he was hopeful of Liaqat Ali Khan of Pakistan helping him in rallying the west Asian states in a 'Muslim bloc' which would be pro-British.[2] Any illusions that Krishna Menon and Nehru might have had about the likelihood of the British Labour government's foreign policy being pro-Indian than pro-Pakistani on matters affecting Indo-Pak relations were thus due for a rude shock.

It would of course be wrong to build too much on this document alone, and we know that later on, during the crisis of the Korean War in 1950-51 the British Labour government partially defied the U.S.A. in supporting some of the diplomatic initiatives of India. However, the year 1948 is significant in British foreign economic policy as the year when attempts were being made, after the convertibility crisis of August 1947, to make the sterling independent of the dollar, and to develop a Western Union as a possible way of waging the cold war without being unduly dependent on the U.S.A. In this situation West Asian oil was an important calculation, and appeals to pan-Islamic sentiment, relayed through Pakistan, appeared a useful diplomatic device. India was economically less important.

Notes

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2. Partha Sarathi Gupta, Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914-1964 (London, Macmillan, due January 1975), ch. IX section ii.

ON THE NATURE OF THE FARAZI MOVEMENT IN BENGAL

Narahari Kaviraj, Calcutta

It is not an easy job for the researcher to analyse correctly the nature of the Farazi movement. For contemporary sources (1) are sharply divided on the point.

If one goes through the volumes of Reports on Native Papers, one would find numerous reports and comments describing the movement as an outburst of communal frenzy. Bengali vernacular newspapers and journals which had the backing of local Hindu Zamindars systematically published tendencious reports on the activities of the Farazis. These journals had special reasons to be annoyed because the Farazis stubbornly resisted all acts of zamindary oppression. The editors frequently used to draw the attention of the public to the lawless actions of the Farazis and urged upon the Government to deal firmly with the members of the sect.

If one goes through the records of the Government of Bengal, one however, gets a different picture. On the basis of records of the Judicial Department, the General Department and those of the Board of Revenue, it is difficult to dismiss this movement as a mere communal outburst. Though this movement was confined to a particular sect among the Muhammedans, there is no doubt that at the bottom of it there were genuine agrarian grievances.

In Lower Bengal in the districts of Dacca, Faridpur, and Bakherganj, the overwhelming majority of the Mussalman population were peasants. To them the Permanent Settlement was nothing but an engine of oppression. Particularly loathsome to them was the power of the Zamindars to enhance rent and levy abwabs as much

as they liked. No less hateful were the laws of distraint which gave the Zemindar or his agent the summary power to arrest any raiyat on the flimsiest pretext. The Patni Regulations which authorised subinfeudation, creating different grades of middlemen, were another source of oppression. The Farazi doctrines with their emphasis on purity and equality made a deep impression on the mind of the oppressed sections of the Mussalman population.

The founder of this sect was Haji Shariatullah, born of obscure parents, who resided in a village in the district of Faridpur. Shariatullah's son Mohomed Mohsin, alias Dudhu Miyan, set himself up as the undisputed leader of the sect after his father's death. He had been very successful in diffusing the Farazi principles throughout Faridpur and the neighbouring districts. He had attained a degree of influence for exceeding that of his father.

In a petition (2) written in Persian, that he submitted to the Government, Dudhu Miyan, stated that he and his father had been guided by a mission to emancipate the Mussalmans from the evil ways to which they had fallen. They had "greatly degenerated in respect to their manners, customs and mode of living, in so much that they used to worship idols and offer sacrifices to the names of the deceased relations, that some had even brought themselves so low that they had made dacoities and highway robberies a regular profession, ... that Fauzdari Courts were overwhelmed with cases involving murder, loss of property and so". In these conditions, in order to direct these Mussalmans from the evil ways, he and his father laboured increasingly with energy and zeal, to "teach them the precepts of their religion, and the commandments of God and the regulations of Government." Dudhu Miyan claimed that they thus set on foot a movement for reformation.

In the petition, it was further stated that the new sect became the target of attack by the local Zamindars. "The Hindu Zamindars were in the habit of exacting money from Mussalman raiyats on account of Dusserah and other Pujahs. The contribution of money by Mussalmans to Hindu Pujahs and ceremonies was held reprehensible by their religion". Dudhu Miyan complained that "all Zamindars, wither Hindu or Mahomedan, in the event of any disputes happening between them and the raiyats, assume themselves the powers of a judge and fine the guilty person, and in the case of delay on the part of the raiyat to pay the fine, practice every sort of oppression towards him". "The imposition of fine by persons other than the officers of the Government and also the recognition thereof by payment on the part of the party fined, are both sinful and contrary to the laws of God and man". He wanted the Government to "enquire as to whether it was a common practice among the zamindars to fabricate false charges of a criminal character and to prefer them maliciously in the Fauzdari Courts against such of their raiyats as might decline to meet their illegal demands, such as mathots etc." He frankly stated that the reformed Mussalmans refused to meet the illegal demands of the Zamindars, which provoked the latter to oppress them most cruelly, and as a consequence the raiyats were completely ruined.

In fact, Dudhu Miyan was looked upon by the oppressed sections as the champion of their rights. They, therefore, flocked to his standard. He had under his influence more than eighty thousand disciples, mainly raiyats, who were at his beck and call. Dudhu Miyan's followers became a force to reckon with. They organised numerous actions to resist the exactions of the

Zamindars. Some of these actions assumed the character of violent agrarian outbursts. They also frequently attacked and ransacked the indigo factories. (3) They used violent means to seek the occupancy of the Government chars in the large rivers.

In a report to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal J.Dunbar, the Commissioner of Dacca, observes "The Farazis profess to return to the pure doctrines of the Koran stripped of all ceremonies and glosses. They assert a kind of equality amongst themselves, which is no doubt very seductive to the lower classes, but which has tended to keep men of wealth, rank and responsibility to whom this levelling system cannot be very palatable, from joining their ranks ... United by the strong bond of a common faith ..... they look upon the cause of even the lowest or the poorest amongst them as the cause of the whole body" (4).

The Commissioner of Dacca in the same report further stated that the Farazis not only resisted successfully the levy of all extra or illegal cesses by Zamindars and talukdars, but with equal ability they refused to pay the land rent. They frequently resisted all demands on that account especially from the Hindu landlords. Nor did they spare the Muslim Zamindars. They gave much more trouble than others in collecting rent. They would withhold it altogether if they dared. They were taught to look forward to the happy time when it would be abolished.

Emphasising the agrarian character of the movement, the superintendent of Police, Lower Provinces, in one of his reports remarked (5). It is a favourite maxim with them that "God made the earth common to all men. The payment of rent is contrary to his law". They preferred holding land under the Government as they drew a distinction between rent to a Zamindar and a payment of tribute to Government. They doggedly insisted on the right of occupancy.

Being enemies of the established order, the Farazis were very much disliked by Hindu Zamindars, orthodox Mussalmans and European planters (6).

For the same reason the Farazis incurred the displeasure of the Government. The District Magistrate of Faridpur described Dudhu Miyan as a dangerous person and he was repeatedly put inside the prison bar. During the great revolt of 1857 the Farazis were closely watched. Suspecting that his presence might excite his followers, Dudhu Miyan was detained in Alipur Jail in 1857 immediately after he was released by the Nizamut Adalat from the sentence of 14 years' imprisonment (7).

The Farazi influence declined to some extent after the death of Dudhu Miyan but it made itself very apparent again after his two sons had come of age.

In a report to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, the Commissioner of the Dacca Division writes: "There has been a marked increase in the influence of Farazi operation among the Mahomedans of the country, situated near where the Zillahs of Backergunj, Faridpur and Dacca unite. The people entirely ignore the authorities, whereas the word of their leaders is paramount. They have set at naught all the orders as to licenses for carrying guns but use them murderously in all affrays. The whole of these districts as a precaution be disarmed" (8).

During the entire period intervening the Rent Act of 1859 and the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 the Farazis were active in the lower district of Bengal. They actively participated in the Indigo Revolt of 1860 and had their share in fomenting the agrarian disturbances (Pabna, Bogra and Dacca) in 1873-74.

As before, the Farazis became very active in resisting all acts of oppression by the local Zamindars, indigo planters and petty government officers. For example, in September, 1869, several hundred Farazis attacked the office of the income tax assessor at Dakshin Shahbazpur in the district of Bakhergunj. They drove away the assessor, committed assault on his men and tore into pieces the records and nathis that were found in the office (9).

In May, 1870 the records point to a Farazi action in Edilpur in Bakherganj district. The local Pattanidar increased the rent by 3 annas in every rupee of the annual rent. He tried to realise the increase from the raiyats. Dadhu Miyan's son intervened, took the side of the raiyats and under their orders the cutchery of the Pattanidars was attacked and burnt(10).

In June, 1870, there was a report of an attack on the Turtipur indigo factory by the raiyats of the village of Ghorapakhyaya and other villages in the thanas of Nawabganj and Shibganj in the district of Maldah. The raiyats were determined not to sow indigo. Nor did they allow others to sow or work for the factory. The police force was attacked by the villagers in a body and the former was forced to escape (11).

In their reports the local authorities repeatedly stressed that the Farazi raiyats were very turbulent and they were ready to fight whenever they were oppressed in any way. The Commissioner of Dacca Division in one of his reports, remarks: Since the introduction of Act X of 1859 the agricultural tenantry have become more independent, and very much more defiant of both landlords and magesterial authorities,12,

Nor should we ignore the typical forms of action which the Farazis adopted to enforce the realisation of their demands. The Farazis took the law into their own hands. They were guided by their own code known as Farazi law. Their strength lay in their unity. They were reported to be very much given to making combinations known as 'bandhs' (13). The local authorities complained: "when the people thus combine they are difficult to manage". The officiating Magistrate of Maldah affirms that there is "a strong combination, like a trades' union in England, among all villagers to resist the oppressions by all means legal or illegal" (14).

Farazi actions were not, however, the manifestation of a conscious movement against the zamindary system. These were spontaneous actions of an infuriated peasantry, belonging to a particular sect within the Muslim community. Hence from the beginning to the end, the Farazi movement was tainted by a sectarian and communal approach. However, it served its purpose by exposing the acts of oppression that were then widely prevalent in the rural districts of Lower Bengal. It forced the attention of the Government as well as public to the urgency of agrarian reform.

1. The most important sources are the records of the Government of Bengal (Judicial Department). The Administration Reports of the Government of Bengal (1871-77) also throw some light on the activities of the Farazis. Some aspects of the Farazi movement can be gleaned from the proceedings of the trials in which the Farazis were involved. Some of these proceedings were published in the form of books and are available in the National Library, Calcutta.

2. Judicial Department Proceedings of 23rd January, 1850, Nos. 60-61.

3. Judicial Department/Judicial Proceedings, 7th-24th February, 1848, Nos. 141-51.

4. Judicial Department/Proceedings of 7th April, 1847, Nos. 98-99.

5. Judicial Department Proceedings of 29th May, 1843, Nos. 23-26, also Proceedings of 25th October 1848, No. 121.

6. Proceedings of Court of Sessions Judge of Zillah Dacca at Faridpur (1847) Government Verses Dudhu Miyan, also Government verses Urman Sikder.

7. Judicial Department/Judicial Proceedings, 10th August, 1857, Nos. 508-9.

8. Judicial Department/Proceedings of September 1970, No. 26.

9. Judicial Department/Proceedings. October, 1869, Nos. 102-04.

10. Judicial Department/Proceedings, May, 1870, Nos. 238-42.

11. Judicial Department, October, 1870, Nos. 22-32.

12. Judicial Department/Proceedings of November 1870, Nos. 163-64.

13. Judicial Department/Proceedings of November 1869, No. 207.

14. Judicial Department/Proceedings of October. 1870, No. 31.

THE TRAVELOGUE OF A RUSSIAN OFFICER IN INDIA

Surendra Gopal, Patna

The rapid expansion of the Tsarist empire in Central Asia in the second half of the nineteenth century created deep suspicions in the minds of the British ruling circles in India. The Tsarist power now in close proximity to the boundaries of India began to show ever increasing interest in Indian affairs. India became the object of rivalry of two great colonial powers.

The Tsarist interest manifested itself at several levels - in promotion of the study of Indian history, culture and language in academic circles[1] in institutions both in Russia and Russian occupied Central Asian territory.[2] As a further measure to add to their knowledge of India, its people, politics etc., increasing number of Tsarist subjects began to visit the country.[3] Some of the trips were sponsored by the government. A number of these government-sponsored visitors to India collected diverse information relating to military affairs, public opinion etc. for the use of their home authorities. These were in addition to the regular reports submitted by the Russian Counsel in Bombay. The government printed some of these accounts of visitors and circulated them to state functionaries dealing with Indian affairs. These reports were treated as secret state documents.

I came across one such report in the Lenin Library, Moscow. The Report printed in St. Petersberg (now Leningrad) in 1908 contains the reports of two military officers, Losyev and Polovtsev. This report has been referred to in Bibliografia Indii (Bibliography of India) published in Moscow in 1965. The Bibliography contains a list of other articles of Losev published in various journals in 1905 and 1906.[4]

The Report was published under the general heading Sbornik Materialov Po Azii (collection of Materials on Asia) No.9 and has the sub-heading Otchety o poezdke po Indii (Report on travel in India). The account of Losyev runs from page 1 to page 144 and that of Polovtsev from page 145 to page 176.

Losyev arrived at Bombay in 1905 and notes that he was immediately spotted by British officials, who put him under the surveillance of a jew named Oskarov.[5] To escape his watcher, Losyev was compelled to travel in cognito.[6] He first visited Poona because it was an important military station.[7] His intention was not only to see things but also to photograph them. His next important visit was to Calcutta where he stayed with an Armenian.[9]

However, the most important object of his attention was the north-west region of India and so he went to Lahore, the capital of the province of the Punjab, in pre-partition India. The Russian Counsel in Bombay was already well-acquainted with some of the Lahore editors,[10] and therefore, Losyev did not have much difficulty in establishing himself in the city and carrying out his assignment.

Having quickly settled down at Lahore, Losyev became active in pursuit of his aims. His activities as well as his observations during this period deserve notice.

First his observations. For example, he notes that all Muslim editors 'praised' Russia[11] and all Hindu editors 'criticised' Russia.[12] He does not give any basis for such a statement. He notes the general sentiment, 'Japan will save India and Russia will occupy her.'[13]

He further found that quite a few people believed that in Russia mass of the people were without 'noses' following an English book, which had ascribed this phenomena to perpetual snow fall in the country.[14]

The type of military information that he gathered was revealing. He noted that English officers in Lahore were taught Russian by one 'Fitsgerel.'[15] He prepared a list of British officers knowing European and Indian languages on 1 January 1906. According to him 153 officers knew Russian, 142 officers knew French and 83 officers knew German.[16] 961 British Officers knew Pushtu and 382 officers knew Punjabi. Only one officer knew Assamese.[17] The list is symbolic of the fact that British officers in India paid more attention to learning Russian than any other European language. Obviously, this was because of the consolidation of Russian control over the Central Asian region in the last four decades of the nineteenth century. The Britishers feared a Russian invasion of India. Again, the British probably for the same reason encouraged their officers to learn Pushtu, the language of the tribesmen on the north-west frontier of India and Afghanistan, the areas situated on the borders of Russian occupied Central Asia. The fact signified British preparedness to meet any potential threat to Afghanistan or north-western India.

While quietly gathering military intelligence Losyev tried to carve out a place for himself in the social life of the city. He lectured to an audience on the evils of drinking.[18] He engaged two persons, one to teach him Persian and the other to teach him Pushtu. The teacher of Persian was Ajit Singh and of Pushtu, Rahim Baksh, an Afghan.[19] The later was an employee of the North Western Railway.[20] It is not

clear how far he was successful in learning the two languages but from Ajit Singh he acquired information about military affairs in Mian Mir.[21] From Ajit Singh he purchased military maps at the behest of the Russian Counsel in Bombay.[22] Rahim Baksh, the Pushtu teacher, supplied him the secret journey plan of Prince of Wales.[23] He was gathering military intelligence all the time.

It will be interesting to find out who this Ajit Singh was? From note No. 1 of page 63, it appears that Ajit Singh was arrested by Britishers for his subversive activities. Was he the famous Ajit Singh, the uncle of martyr Bhagat Singh who repeatedly suffered imprisonment at the hands of the alien government for his active participation in the freedom struggle of India?

There is another interesting piece of information. Losyev got very friendly with Inshalla, the editor of Batan. It is not clear whether this was a daily, weekly or a monthly journal. At the house of Inshalla, he met his host's friend Riazuddin, an inhabitant of Bareilly.[24] Riazuddin was on a visit to his friend. From Riazuddin he learnt the following: In 1903, for the Military Officers Academy at Tashkent, a teacher of Hindustani was required and the Russian Counsel in Bombay contacted his friend, Inshalla the editor of Batan for the purpose. Inshalla recommended Riazuddin. However, at the last moment Riazuddin became afraid and he sent his brother Khaliluddin,[25] who was then teaching Hindustani to Russian officers at Tashkent and had taught Losyev at the Academy.[26] Losyev gave money to Riazuddin so that he could proceed to Tashkent to meet his brother.[27]

He met another journalist who edited a paper called "Paisa Akhbar" and was keenly interested in Central Asian affairs. This editor for keeping himself well-informed of political situation in Central Asia subscribed to a Persian newspaper published from Ashkhabad, now the capital of Soviet Turkmenia.[28] The newspaper was a supplement to the Russian government publication Zakaspiiskoye Obozreniye.[29] The editor had begun learning Russian language with the help of a German-Russian self-taught book.[30] This bit of information compells us to think that at least some of the Indian intellectuals were not unmindful of the expanding Tsarist empire in the Central Asia and were keen to understand this phenomena. The motive of this journalist, is not clear at this stage. Was it a more intellectual curiosity or was it an aversion to British rule in India or was it a concern at the disappearance of Muslim sovereignty in the region at the hands of a Christian power? There are further questions to be answered. Who was Inshalla? What were his leanings? What was the policy of the newspaper Batan, edited by him? The same questions may be asked about the editor of Paisa Akhbar. Unfortunately, we do not know even the name of the editor of Paisa Akhbar. Why did they co-operate with Losyev? These bits of informations when pieced together would shed interesting light on the history of journalism in the first decade of the present century in the Punjab.

Losyev formulated a project for publishing a newspaper in Persian putting forth the Russian point of view. The newspaper was to be a counterblast to a newspaper Hablul-Matin, published from Calcutta.[31] I do not know what was the attitude of Hablul-Matin, which provoked Losyev to think of bringing out

another publication to nullify its effects on the readers. I am not aware if the project ever became a reality.

From Lahore, Losyev visited Peshawar and Baluchistan both on borders of Afghanistan. Before leaving for Peshawar, he was visited in his hotel-room by the two editors, and Ajit Singh.[32] At Quetta in Baluchistan, he met a Russian lady who had married a German trader.[33] The local newspaper "Baluchistan", published a news item against Losyev written by one Hudson Amatheurs.[34] This was probably the sign that his activities were now being viewed with suspicion and it was the right time for him to escape from the country before he met with any unpleasant experience at the hands of the British administrators.

Thus the brief account of Losyev has no particular focus and therefore, no specific problem to grapple with. Hence, the account does not have a central theme. The tale of his activities and experiences incidentally add to our knowledge of the situation in North-west India, particularly in the Punjab. We learn of the attitudes of local journalists to a foreign power and their keen interest in the Central Asian situation. Finally, the account also reveals an aspect of the attitude of the Russian government to affairs in India which was hitherto very little known. Indirectly we can infer the pivotal role, the Tsarist government assigned to its Central Asian territories in its relation to India.

Reference

1. Surendra Gopal, "Indian Studies in Russia", Journal of Indian History, Vol.XLV (1967), pp.569-582.
2. Ibid., "Indian Studies in Soviet Central Asia", The Indo-Asian Culture, New Delhi, April, 1971, pp.19-33.
3. A list of some of these travellers in the opening decades of this century is given in Eva Ya. Lyusternik, Russko-Indiiskiye Ekonomicheskiye, Nauchniye i Kulturniye Svyazi v XIX v., Moscow, 1966, p.171
4. Bibliographia Indii, G.G.Kotovskii (ed.), Moscow, 1965, pp.150, 178, 190, 231, 482.
5. Otchety O Poezdke po Indii, (SPB, 1909), p.5.
6. Ibid., p.6
7. Ibid., p.8
8. Ibid., p.9
9. Ibid., p.18
10. Ibid., p.41
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15. Ibid., p.90
16. Ibid., p.91
17. Ibid., p.90
18. Ibid., p.54
19. Ibid., p.56-57
20. Ibid., p.63
21. Ibid., p.63 Mian Mir
22. Ibid., p.61
23. Ibid., p.64
24. Ibid., p.55
25. Ibid., p.56
26. Ibid., p.55
27. Ibid., p.117
28. Ibid., p.81
29. Ibid.,
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., p.82
32. Ibid., p.120
33. Ibid., p.109
34. Ibid., p.118

BRITISH POLICY AND THE INDIAN PROBLEM, 1939-40

Amba Prasad, Delhi

This paper is based on the records of the British Cabinet as also on Linlithgow and Zetland collections. The published works which have something to do with the subject, more particularly V.P. Menon's Transfer of Power in India (1957), H.V. Hodson's Great Divide (1969) and C.H. Philips (ed.)'s Partition and Independence (1970), have not utilised these documents.

Lord Linlithgow, who was the Viceroy in India when World War II broke out in Europe, issued, on 3rd September 1939, a proclamation that a state of war emergency existed in India. From September 1939 till May 1940, the Government of Neville Chamberlain was in power in Britain, with Marquess of Zetland as Secretary of State for India.

The political climate in India was not so unfavourable to a settlement during the months from September 1939 to March 1940. There was a lot of good will for Britain in the Congress; Gandhi even thought in emotional terms for Britain. Jinnah had not gone to the extreme limit of demanding a separate state for the Muslims; a solution within an Indian Union could be found. The Congress demanded a declaration of war aims in regard to democracy and to the right of self-determination to Indians by being allowed to frame their own Constitution through a Constituent Assembly. In the short term, they wanted to participate in the conduct of the war through representation in the Viceroy's Executive Council.[1] The Muslim League laid down two conditions for giving support to the Government: in the present, justice and fair play for Muslims in the Congress Provinces; for the future, an assurance that no

declaration or constitutional advance for India should be made, nor any Indian constitution framed or adopted without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League.[2] Though Jinnah demanded a right of veto on India's constitutional progress, the situation was such that a settlement was possible if the Viceroy was willing to act with statesmanship. But Linlithgow did not act with imaginative insight, not even when Zetland and Labour Party Leaders were suggesting the need of a hold initiative.[3]

On 18th October, 1939, the Viceroy issued a statement after obtaining the approval of the War Cabinet. There was a promise of modifying the scheme of the Act of 1935 at the end of the war in the light of Indian views, giving full weight to the opinions and interests of minorities. There was neither the declaration of war aims nor any reference to a Constitutent Assembly. The immediate situation was to be met 'associating' Indian public opinion with the prosecution of the war by the establishment of a 'consultative group', representative of all major political parties in British India and of the Indian Princes, over which the Governor-General would himself preside.[4]

On 25th and 26th October, the War Cabinet decided that the Viceroy's supreme power under the existing constitution would remain intact and that there would be no legislation in Parliament during the war to amend the constitution and no promise that would tie the hands of Parliament after the war. This decision was the result of effort on the part of the diehard group of the Cabinet. However, Chamberlain and Zetland was not at heart with this decision as exchange of views in November-December between Zetland and Linlithgow showed.[5] As the stalemate deepened after the resignation of Congress ministries in the Provinces and the Observance of the Deliverance Day by

Jinnah, a new and bold initiative was required.

This initiative came from Cripps. He prepared a draft scheme in which the idea of a constitution making body representatives of all parties and groups and princes was mooted and it was stipulated that if an agreed Constitution were to emerge, Britain should agree to it and her relation with India could be regulated by a Treaty.

In a private and personal letter to Neville Chamberlain, Zetland explained the outlines of the plan which Cripps wanted to carry with him to India in order to sell his ideas to Indian leaders and, though he did not commit himself for a favourable consideration of Cripps' scheme, he considered the idea not unattractive and, if an agreement were reached, he would find it very difficult on moral grounds alone to resist it.[6] The Prime Minister Chamberlain and Zetland met on 4th December, 1939. The Prime Minister's views were summarised in an office note thus: "He did not dissent from the view that the time had come for a forward move. He would therefore be prepared to consider the Cripps proposal."[7]

But the Viceroy was strongly opposed to the scheme and considered it ill-advised at the time. He believed, after the resignation of Congress ministers in the Provinces, that he had the trump card. He believed further that as long as the Congress failed to get the agreement of the Muslim League, it was impossible to meet their demand for self-government. He fondly hoped that the existing discords between the communities could strengthen Britain's control in India "for many years."[8] Obviously Linlithgow had an easy conscience on Indian question.

Zetland conveyed the strongly held belief of the Viceroy to the Prime Minister, adding at the same time, that he was disposed to agree with the Viceroy.[9] His reasons are stated in Zetland's private and personal letter to Chamberlain on December 12 thus: "Congress has been taken by surprise by the violence of Jinnah's attack upon them and do not quite know what to do next. Any suggestion that we were contemplating a move in the direction of a Constituent Assembly would, in Linlithgow's opinion, be regarded as God-send by the Congress, but as black bareness on our part by the Muslims. I do not propose, therefore, to make any further move at present, though I think that the time may come when I shall have to give further consideration to the matter."[10]

Chamberlain did not want that the matter should rest there, desired that the move should continue and that they "should have to consider it further later on."[11]

Linlithgow sent his views in a long letter to Zetland dated December 21, 1939. On this Chamberlain's comment was that it was a 'book' rather than a letter.[12] The Viceroy was against any 'radical policy' or a 'new initiative'. His comment on Cripps' plan was that it would "be going into deeper waters" if they accepted the principle of Constituent Assembly or the idea of a Treaty.[13] Obviously his thinking was one of a piece with the diehard members of the War Cabinet. He wanted to exercise a veto on any bold initiative for a settlement of the Indian problem.

Some hope was aroused by Linlithgow's speech at the Orient Club, Bombay, on January 10, 1940. During the early

months following this speech, Linlithgow had meeting with Gandhi and Jinnah. Gandhi was more conciliatory but Jinnah was getting more adament. Linlithgow conveyed in detail to Zetland the points which emerged from these discussions.[14] One of the important points he conveyed was the threat held out by Jinnah that "if Congress Ministers did return to office under existing conditions, there would be Civil War in India." To that, as reported by Linlithgow himself, his reply was that that was a very grave utterance from a man in his position.[15] The hope aroused by Linlighgow's speech at the Orient Club was a false hope. It was aroused to be dashed down in February-March following. His stand was that it was better to wait so that Britain may get a better bargain. His advice to Zetland was to "lie back for the present." As a matter of fact, until Amery took new initiative in June-July 1940, Linlithgow's policy was characterised by four guidelines viz. "refrain from action," "wait upon events", "avoid running after the Congress and "lie back and not move".[16]

This policy had the strong support of Churchill and Sir John Simon, Chancellor of the Exchequer. In his letter of February 13, 1940 to Chamberlain, Sir John Simon wrote: "What I would urge is that we should not accept the position that the be-all and end-all of our Indian policy is to reach agreement with Gandhi. If we do follow this Will-o-the Wisp we shall, I am convinced, and in an appaling bog."[17]

Still more formidable was the support that came from Churchill to the policy of do-nothing. Churchill wrote to Chamberlain on February 20, 1940: "I write to tell you what I feel you already know, that I am entirely in agreement with him

(Sir John Simon). The policy of running after Gandhi and the Congress, which the Viceroy conceives it his duty to pursue, is steadily wearing down every remaining pillar of British authority. The Secretary of State ought to send him clear instructions defining and correcting his course during the war."[18]

The War Cabinet discussed the Indian problem on 12th April, 1940 after the adoption by the Muslim League of Pakistan Resolution and after the Ramgarh Session of the Congress. The Secretary of State expressed in this Cabinet meeting his agreement with the view of the Governor-General that, for the time being, he should "lie back" and not make any constructive proposals.[19]

II

In May 1940, sudden disasters of war brought about a change of Government in Britain. Winston Churchill replaced Neville Chamberlain as Prime Minister. L.S. Amery succeeded the Marquess of Zetland as Secretary of State for India. Linlithgow continued to be the Viceroy.

On June 2, 1940, Amery asked Linlithgow whether there was a possibility of an initiative on his part, and suggested that Party Leaders might meet informally to see whether some agreement could be reached to the procedure to be adopted after the war in order to arrive at a constitutional settlement.[20] Linlithgow, in his reply on June 10, argued against this course and said that such a move would lead them nowhere.[21] On June 17, when France sued for peace, Amery again wrote to Linlithgow saying that, if he felt any difficulty in taking the initiative, it might come from himself or from the Cabinet.[22] But on June 20, the Viceroy replied saying that he was still unconvinced.[23] On June 22, Amery again pointed out the dangers of delay in action.[24]

On Amery's insistence the Viceroy held talks with Jinnah on June 27 and with Gandhi on June 29. Jinnah laid down two conditions for the League's participation in government. First, the British Government must undertake to adop no constitution, temporary or final without the previous approval of Muslim India. Second, in any War-time organisation, 'Muslim India must have an equal share in the composition of the Governments, central or provincial.' The Congress demanded an acknowledgement of the complete independence of India and establishment of a provisional national government at the centre. The Congress promised to throw its full weight in national defence if their demands were conceded. This was described by Rajagopalachari as a "positive approach to Britain." The Congress Working Committee Resolution of July 7, came nearest to suggesting a reasonable solution of the immediate problems. A provisional National Government was suggested which would command the confidence of all the elected elements in the Central Legislature."[25] But the response of the British Government was not a positive one. A bold and courageous initiative was called for but neither the Viceroy nor the British Cabinet were capable of taking it.

The June correspondence between Amery and Linlithgow resulted in the production of two schemes one that of the Viceroy and the other that of the Secretary of State. The Viceroy conveyed it on 1st July through a telegram to the Secretary of State and the latter produced an elaborate Memorandum for the War Cabinet on 6th July, 1940.[25a] The main points of Amery's Memorandum are summarised here:

(a) That throughout winter, and spring the Viceroy acted on his 'lie back' policy but that he was feeling that in the present circumstances a policy of inaction was no longer defensible.

(b) That a more precise statement of British intentions both as to method of approach and as to date than the "vague generalities" of previous declarations, had become necessary and had been continously pressed for by the moderate leaders of Indian opinion. Amery was particularly anxious for indicating the method and the date in the absence of which, he said, we remain open to the charge that we are, in sincere and are merely playing for time."

(c) Amery was prepared to concede to Indiansthe right to frame their own Constitution "That is the core of what is reasonable in the Congress demand and is, indeed, the natural corollary of our own pledge."

(d) As to timing, he laid stress on his proposed statement of the idea of "immediately after the war."

(e) He laid emphasis on the point that the proposal of a declaration was the outcome of Linlithgow's initiative and that the "speed was the essence of the business" and that the gesture "be made now."

Chruchill wanted to establish direct contact with the Viceroy. So he wrote directly to Linlithgow on July 16, 1940 in which he conveyed the approval of the Cabinet to the two proposals made him, namely the expansion of the executive Council and the setting up of a War Advisory Committee and inviting cooperation of leading parties. Para 6 of the Telegram of the Viceroy dated July 1, 1940 was read by some, wrote Churchill, "as suggesting

that you thought, that in order to make these two measures effective, they should be accompanied by some new declaration on the constitutional issue".[26] Churchill asked whether he considered that the declaration was necessary; if so what were the new circumstances in the condition of India which justify this declaration and the actual form of the declaration. He added his personal view that he saw great difficulties in his agreeing upon a new constitutional declaration at the present time when invasion appears imminent, when the life of the Mother-country is obviously at stake and when the consequence of a thrashing out in Parliament of the issue involved in such a far-reaching departure, is impossible.[27] Further telegrams exchanged between Churchill and Linlithgow from July 16, 1940 to July 30, 1940 lead to the following conclusions:

First, that Churchill was greatly annoyed with Amery for pressurising the Viceroy into taking an initiative towards a settlement of the Indian problem and asking him to agree to the idea of a declaration. Obviously Churchill did not want any declaration. He had two arguments against accepting the proposal of a Constitution making body to frame a Constitution on the conclusion of the war: (a) "We should have to know beforehand what this body is and feel assured that it truly represented the broad masses of the leading Indian communities.....", (b) It would further be quite impossible - to pledge in advance the attitude of a future Parliament...."[28]

Secondly, Linlithgow, who was himself so conservative - minded and who so firmly believed in a 'lie back' policy, now received formidable support of Churchill, who appeared to protect him against a too liberal Amery. Linlithgow, complained to Churchill that Amery had 'hustled him unduly' and that his

instructions gave him the impression that these had been approved by the Cabinet. Linlithgow wrote that he was "greatly concerned that we should not make any premature move, and I made that clear to the Secretary of State".[28a] Amery offered his defence to Churchill in these words: "there is nothing in Linlithgow's letters to me which indicates the slightest shade of impatience or personal disagreement at the time when we were discussing these matters."[29] Amery quoted extensively from Viceroy's letters of June 13, June 27, July 1, in support of his plea that the Viceroy put forward his own recommendations for solution rather than be pushed forward by Amery himself.[30] Then came Amery's accusation which suggested that Linlithgow could lie when in difficulty. Amery wrote that the draft declaration was finalised by him by incorporating most of the suggestions of the Viceroy and was brought before the Cabinet on July 11; and added: "It was only after he (Viceroy) learnt of the rejection of the proposed declaration by the Cabinet that he sent me the reproaching telegram of July 15th which so completely surprised me and put me in so false a position vis-a-vis yourself and the War Cabinet."[31]

But Linlithgow did stand by the idea of a declaration along the lines indicated in paragraph 6 of the telegram of 1st July. He qualified it on two grounds viz. (a) that the announcement of expansion will certainly fall flatter if there was no accompanying statement such as "public opinion here tends, however, unreasonably, to expect on these occasions"; and (b) that not much risk was involved if they accepted the principle that Indians themselves should be left to frame proposals for parts of new Constitution subject to certain obligations which His Majesty's Government must fulfil.[32]

Finally, there was the crucial suggestion in Linlithgow's letter which had the support of Amery. It is proposed to have a specific clause to the effect that "Britain could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibility for peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority was directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life, nor could they be parties to the coercion of such an element into submission to such a government."[33]

III

Between Churchill and Amery grew serious clash over the India question. Amery had liberal tendencies and wanted to do something to solve the Indian problem. He knew that Churchill will not accept any new ideas or initiatives on India. So he tried to persuade Linlithgow to give up his "lie back" policy, take initiative, meet Indian leaders and suggest ways of solving the problem. For a month beginning 1st June, he carried on correspondence with Linlithgow without any reference to the Prime Minister or the War Cabinet.[34]

When Churchill came to know of this, he was angry that the Secretary of State should have been dictating policy to the Viceroy without reference to him or to the Cabinet. He questioned the propriety of Amery's giving the Viceroy an impression that he was conveying to him the views of the Cabinet. Moreover, Churchill was unhappy that Amery should have pressurised Linlithgow. He was so much annoyed with Amery that he called his Memorandum as "a piece of hypocrisy from beginning to end."[35]

This raises questions of both policy and constitution. In the War Cabinet,[36] Churchill was a dominating figure, and used to invite to the meetings Lord Simon, Sir John Anderson, Lord Lloyd and used to take their advice on Indian questions. Sir James Grigg was also consulted by this group as he had special knowledge of Punjab Muslims. This was a die-hard group. Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, two other members of the Cabinet, used to stand for a liberal policy towards India and they were supporters of Amery.[37] Attlee and Arthur Greenwood, represented the Labour and supported Amery in the initiative on India and stood for a more radical approach. Churchill's group did not at first favour a declaration on India, when it came to be accepted, proposed modifications to suit their point of view. Nor did they at first support the idea that the term 'Dominion Status' be applied to India. Amery and Halifax thought that they could not get away from the use of the term 'Dominion Status.' Attlee was of the opinion that some form of declaration was necessary but questioned the wisdom of Indian leaders in framing an agreed constitution.[38]

The War Cabinet censored Amery for not having consulted it before he had developed his idea to the Viceroy. The Cabinet also placed on record its view that the so-called proposals of the Viceroy had been made by him after 'considerable persuation' had been exercised upon him by the Secretary of State.[39]

The Prime Minister expressed his view on the Constitutional issue involved by saying: "The position as to consultation with the Viceroy must necessarily be different under a small War Cabinet from the position in peace-time, when the Secretary of State was himself a member of the Cabinet".

The Cabinet finally agreed to the idea of the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the setting up of a War Advisory Committee; also agreed to the proposal of having a declaration. It is to be noted, however, that the Prime Minister was invited to draft the statement in preference to the Secretary of State for India, so much was the distrust in his liberal intentions.

At last the statement known as the August offer was drafted by the Prime Minister incorporating the views of Linlithgow and Amery as modified by Lord Simon and Lord Lloyd. He particularly drafted paragraph 7 to take place of paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Viceroy's Draft.

One special feature of the August offer is the specific assurance to the Minorities that no constitutional advance would be made in India without their consent. In effect Muslim League was given a veto on India's constitutional advance. A second feature is that, after the conclusion of the war "with the least possible delay," a body representative of the "principal elements in India's national life" will be set up to devise the framework of the new Constitution. The goal of Dominion status was reiterated. As a short-term measure, expansion of Viceroy's Executive Council and setting up of a Consultative Committee were authorised.

It is outside the scope of this paper to discuss the August offer and how it was received in India and abroad. Suffice it to say that it showed the clever hand of a die-hard Churchill and represented the policy of "lie back."*

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* The paper could not be placed in authorwise alphabetical order as it was received late.

References.

1. The resolution of the Congress Working Committee, 15th September, 1939. Gwyer and Appadorai, Documents, II, 484-87.

2. The resolution of the Muslim League Working Committee, 18th September 1939, Gwyer and Appadorai, Ibid.

3. Zetland to Linlithgow, October 11, 1939. Zetland was willing to listen to opinion of Labour Party leaders such as Cripps and Attlee who knew better than Congress mind than any other members of the Cabinet. He was willing to show initiative and suggest a radical approach to Indian problems but Linlithgow remained hostile and nothing happened.

4. Cmd. 6121, p.9.

5. Zetland to Linlithgow, November 22, 1939.

6. Zetland to Neville Chamberlain, December 1, 1939.

7. Note of Prime Minister's office on file dated December 4, 1939.

8. Linlithgow to Zetland, December 18, 1939.

9. Zetland to Chamberlain, December 19, 1939.

10. Ibid.

11. Chamberlain to Zetland, December 20, 1939.

12. Chamberlain to Zetland, January 11, 1940.

13. Linlithgow to Zetland, December 21, 1939.

14. Viceroy to Secretary of State, February 6, 1940. Nos. 186-S).

15. Viceroy to Secretary of State, February 6, 1940. (No. 196-S).

16. Linlithgow to Zetland, February 13, 21, 27, March 8, 1940.

17. Sir John Simon to Neville Chamberlain, February 13, 1940.

18. Chruchill to Chamberlain, February 20, 1940.

19. War Cabinet Minutes, Minute 10 December, April 12, 1940.

20. Secretary of State to Governor-General, June 2, 1940.

21. Viceroy to Secretary of State, June 10, 1940.

22. Secretary of State to Viceroy, June 17, 1940.

23. Viceroy to Secretary of State, June 20, 1940.

24. Secretary of State to Viceroy, June 22, 1940.

25. The Indian National Congress, Resolution, 1940-46(pp.74-75).

25a. War Cabinet W.P(G)(40)173.

26. Prime Minister to Viceroy, July 16, 1940.

27. Ibid.

28. Churchill to Linlithgow, July 28, 1940.

28a. Amery to Churchill, July 31, 1940.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Linlithgow to Churchill, July 18, 1940.

33. Ibid.

34. W.P(40)272.

35. Order of the P.M. July 23, 1940.

36. War Cabinet Meeting July 25, 1940, Minutes PM(40)201.

37. The clash between Churchill and Amery even found publicity in the Star of July 31, 1940. It wrote "Mr. Amery, believe it or not, has become almost a hero to many Indians"; and also "The 66-year old Mr. Amery stated at the end of May, ten days after his appointment as Secretary of State for India, that 'the attainment by India of free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth is the goal of our policy'". A cutting of this was sent to the Prime Minister by Lord Simon. Churchill wrote to Chamberlain on July 27 about the way Amery was behaving and asked him if he would give a certificate of good character in writing for Amery. Chamberlain did so saying "I am convinced that he is incapable of doing deliberately anything that he did not think right and honourable". (Chamberlain to Churchill, July 27, 1940).

38. War Cabinet Meeting, July 25, 1940 Minutes, op.cit.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.